set up in the state of Tamil Nadu. From these centers, 6540 students have passed out till December, 2007 and have been appropriately obsorbed by the industry. Government is also implementing various developmental schemes in the State for upgrading skills and also providing infrastructural input and marketing support for the purpose. During the year 2007-08, an amount of 33.76 crores has been released by the Government of India under various schemes like Integrated Handlooms Development Scheme.

**Effect of strengthening of rupee against dollar on the textile sector**

†763. SHRI SANJAY RAUT:
SHRI DATTA MEGHE:

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the textile sector is facing problems due to the strengthening of rupee more than 13 per cent against the dollar in the last year;

(b) if so, whether the Indian Textile Industry Federation has made certain suggestions to avoid the loss being suffered by the textile sector;

(c) if so, the steps taken by Government to promote the textile industry based on these suggestions; and

(d) the steps taken by Government to ensure that this sector being the second largest employment provider after agriculture does not face such problems in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) to (d) The Government is seized of the submissions of textiles export promotion councils and other associations, which attribute the decline in India's textiles exports to the recent appreciation of the Indian rupee vis-a-vis the US dollar. The Indian textiles industry has been demanding various concessions, which include refund of State and local levies, higher rates of Duty Entitlement Pass Book (DEPB) and Duty Drawback, etc., to cope with the adverse situation. The Government has, in response, introduced certain measures to provide relief to the affected exporters. These include increase in Duty Entitlement Pass Book and Duty Drawback rates, exemption from service tax on select services, reduction in interest rates of pre-shipment and post-shipment credit, and faster clearance of arrears of terminal excise duties and Central Sales Tax.

**Steps to increase powerlooms in the country**

764. SHRI S. ANBALAGAN: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) the number of powerlooms as on 31st December, 2007 in the country, State-wise;

(b) whether Government has taken any steps during each of the last two years for the increase of powerlooms in the country and the result achieved thereon;

(c) whether any target has been fixed for increase of powerlooms in the country during the Eleventh Plan period; and

(d) if so, the details thereof, State-wise and the steps proposed to be taken to achieve the targets?

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.